Amendments to the Claims

1.   (Currently amended) A computer program used with a picture generation system for generating animation pictures to be recorded on a recording medium, comprising the steps of:

    designating a first area in a source picture;

    designating a second area in the source picture;

    generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the first area;

    generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the second area;

    designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

    generating an intermediate picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the third area;

    generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

    relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

    generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

    recording the file group on a the recording medium.

2.   (Currently amended) A computer program used with a picture generation system for generating animation pictures to be recorded on a recording medium, comprising the steps of:

    designating a first area in a source picture;

    designating a second area in the source picture;

    generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the first area;

generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the second area;

combining a portion of the start picture and a portion of the end picture into an intermediate picture;

generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

recording the file group on a the recording medium.

3.   (Currently amended) A computer program used with a picture generation system for generating animation pictures for transmission to an external device, comprising the steps of:

designating a first area in a source picture;

designating a second area in the source picture;

generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the first area;

generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the second area;

designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

generating an intermediate picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the third area;

generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

transmitting the file group toward ~~an~~ the external device.

4.   (Currently amended) A computer program used with a picture generation system for generating animation pictures for transmission to an external device, comprising the steps of:

designating a first area in a source picture;

designating a second area in the source picture;

generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the first area;

generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the second area;

combining a portion of the start picture and a portion of the end picture into an intermediate picture;

generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

transmitting the file group toward ~~an~~ the external device.

5.   (Canceled)

6.   (Original) A method of generating animation pictures, comprising the steps of:

designating a first area in a source picture;

designating a second area in the source picture;

cutting a portion, which extends in the first area, from the source picture to generate a start picture;

cutting a portion, which extends in the second area, from the source picture to generate an end picture;

designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

cutting a portion, which extends in the third area, from the source picture to generate an intermediate picture;

generating an image file which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information; and

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file.

7.   (Original) A method as recited in claim 6, further comprising the step of recording the file group on a removable recording medium.

8.   (Original) An apparatus for generating animation pictures, comprising:

first means for designating a first area in a source picture;

second means for designating a second area in the source picture;

third means for cutting a portion, which extends in the first area designated by the first means, from the source picture to generate a start picture;

fourth means for cutting a portion, which extends in the second area designated by the second means, from the source picture to generate an end picture;

fifth means for designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

sixth means for cutting a portion, which extends in the third area designated by the fifth means, from the source picture to generate an intermediate picture;

seventh means for generating an image file which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

(S.N. 10/804,014)

eighth means for relating the image file generated by the seventh means with an audio file containing data representative of audio information; and

ninth means for generating a file group including the image file and the audio file.

9. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 8, further comprising tenth means for recording the file group generated by the ninth means on a removable recording medium.

10-11. (Canceled)

(S.N. 10/804,014)